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Review of Gennans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration

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Germans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration. By Frederick C. Luebke. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990. Index. xxii + 198 pp. \$24.95.

This book is a collection of nine essays Frederick C. Luebke published between 1965 and 1985 and one essay specifically written for this volume dealing with German-American historiography of the last decades. The essays—including revisions and addenda—reflect Luebke's impressive contribution to the social, political, and cultural history of German Americans and provide an overview of the substantial German immigration to the United States. The essays also delineate Luebke's changing focus from the Great Plains and Midwest of the nineteenth century to an enlarged nationwide perspective of Germans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To go even beyond this agenda, Luebke recently focused his interests on a comparative study of German immigrants in the U.S. and Brazil, concentrating on their experiences during World War I.

As is the case for many historians, Luebke originally developed an interest in the history of Germans in the U.S. by studying his own family history, but Luebke was able to transcend the narrowly defined constraints of contributionalist and filiopietist German-American historiography and to put ethnic history into the framework where it should belong: in the broader context of American social fabric and hence American history, with a strong emphasis on social history. The writing of this kind of history, or "new immigration history," emphasizes socio-cultural diversity within a certain ethnic

group and does not avoid—as a matter of fact often seeks out—the subject of conflict between the dominant host society and in Luebke's case one of their largest subsocieties—the German Americans. The best example of the latter aspect is Luebke's *The Bonds of Loyalty: German-Americans and World War I* (1974).

In order to achieve his goals, Luebke applied the tools of sociology and political science and later used the methodology of cultural geography and anthropology. One of his major concerns, the highly relevant subject of ethnic political behavior, is reflected in three essays in this volume. In order to understand this complex process better, Luebke turned to Lee Benson's explanation of political behavior by ethno-religious agents rather than by socioeconomic factors. Also Samuel P. Hay's notion of political history influenced Luebke's conceptualization and methodology in that respect, as he states in his introduction (xv). That Oscar Handlin and H. Richard Niebuhr also influenced him—at least in his early essays—is not hard to detect.

This collection of essays was indeed worthwhile to present in a single volume, another publication of the fine Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial series.

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